

of our most fundamental rights, and that is the right to vote.

I was born and raised in Texas and I vividly remember the days of Jim Crow, segregation, and the poll tax. The Supreme Court decision could turn the clock back to these very, very tragic days in our American history.

It is truly tragic how the majority of the Court has simply refused to acknowledge these real threats to our voting rights and turned its back on the law that people fought and died for.

Now is the time for urgent, bipartisan congressional action. We must defend the heart and soul of this democracy.

As our drum major for justice, Dr. Martin Luther King, once said, "Voting is the foundation stone for political action."

I am reminded of this every year when I march across the Edmund Pettus Bridge in Selma, Alabama, with our great warrior, Congressman JOHN LEWIS, who really sacrificed so much for justice and for freedom.

Truly, our votes are the bedrock of our democracy.

BORDER SECURITY

(Mrs. LUMMIS asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mrs. LUMMIS. Mr. Speaker, today in the Oversight and Government Reform Committee hearing on border security, we heard from border officials that the border is not secure, or more specifically we heard no response when we asked: Is the border secure or not? And they would not answer "yes" and they would not answer "no."

The American people have been asking for a secure border before we engage in comprehensive immigration reform for years. The fact that this administration and, quite frankly, previous administrations have not secured the border, makes it premature to address the Senate bill here in the House.

Comprehensive immigration reform must be preceded by a secure border.

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VOTING RIGHTS ACT

(Ms. KELLY of Illinois asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Ms. KELLY of Illinois. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to urge my colleagues to right a shameful wrong committed by the Supreme Court and update the Voting Rights Act to restore an essential protection against voter discrimination.

By gutting the Voting Rights Act, the Court greatly dishonored those who fought and died to protect the rights of the disenfranchised, who continue to face pervasive voting discrimination. Recent efforts in parts of the country to impose voter ID laws, to limit access to early voting and to gerrymander districts to hinder the minority vote serve

as irrefutable proof that voter discrimination remains a real threat to our democracy. The Voting Rights Act prevented discrimination in these cases, something it can't do as it exists now.

We must act immediately to fix the gaping hole in this vital protection of the right to vote. Each day that passes without a strong Voting Rights Act is another day justice is deferred. We have a moral imperative to act swiftly in a bipartisan manner to get this done. I urge my colleagues to act now.

VOTING RIGHTS ACT

(Mr. CARSON of Indiana asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. CARSON of Indiana. Mr. Speaker, earlier this week, the Supreme Court made a decision that threatens the right to vote for millions of Americans.

With this misguided decision, leaders in States with a history of discrimination can proceed unimpeded with plans to obstruct the civil rights of American citizens. Whether through gerrymandering or voter ID laws, like the one in my home State of Indiana, efforts are being made to restrict the voting rights of minorities, low-income families and seniors.

I stand today to ask my colleagues in Congress to recognize the importance of preserving the right to vote for all Americans, regardless of background. As elected Representatives, we understand better than anyone that an open, equitable process is the very foundation and definition of our democracy.

Mr. Speaker, the Supreme Court called on Congress to act for the good of our country and our constituents. We must act boldly and quickly.

SAVE THE VOTING RIGHTS ACT OF 1965

(Mr. LEWIS asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. LEWIS. Mr. Speaker, I ask—I beg—of all of our colleagues, Democrats and Republicans, to come together and save the Voting Rights Act of 1965.

I wish somehow, in some way, that members of the United States Supreme Court could come and walk in my shoes. I have seen hundreds and thousands of people stand in a movable line, asked to count the numbers of bubbles in a bar of soap, the number of jellybeans in a jar. I've seen too many of my sisters and brothers denied the right to register, denied the right to vote, simply because of the color of their skin.

We've come too far. We've made too much progress, Mr. Speaker, and we cannot go back—for the vote is precious. It is almost sacred. It is the most powerful, nonviolent tool we have in a democratic society, and no one, but no one—African American, Latino,

White, Asian American, Native American—should be denied the right to participate in the democratic process. So let's come together and do what we should do, and what another generation of elected officials did.

STUDENT LOAN RATES

(Mr. BARBER asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. BARBER. I am deeply discouraged that as we face the impending doubling of interest rates for student loans that House leadership will send us home tomorrow without a solution.

More than 7 million students, former students and their families in the United States, including more than 450,000 in my home State of Arizona, rely on these loans to help pay for college. Federal student loans are a critical tool for ensuring that educational opportunities remain open to as many Americans as possible.

Higher education is a critical economic engine for my State and for the Nation. Workers age 25 and older, with a bachelor's degree, we know, earn 63 percent more than those with a high school diploma. These differences will only increase as the world economy becomes more competitive and technologically advanced.

I urge my colleagues on both sides of the aisle to stay here, not go home tomorrow, but stay here and work together to prevent student loan interest rates from doubling in 4 days. D-day is July 1, and we must act now to support the aspiring young Americans to get their college educations.

BALDWIN STREET MIDDLE SCHOOL, A SCHOOL TO WATCH

(Mr. HUIZENGA of Michigan asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. HUIZENGA of Michigan. Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the opportunity today to do a little bragging about Baldwin Street Middle School, which came to visit me today from Hudsonville, Michigan. They came to brag about their excellence and success as being designated a School to Watch.

That's a national program that goes in and identifies middle schools around the country that are very focused on innovation and success but also on improvement. Every single day, they are going into that building as administrators and as teachers to improve, not only the students, but themselves. And I think that is what we need more of here in education in the United States. They were also very proud to know that I had a staff member, Nate Bult, who is an alumni of that middle school. They were very, very proud to see him and the success that he has been able to have.

So, again, I just want to congratulate Baldwin Street Middle School in Hudsonville, Michigan, for their dedication to the students of the Second